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WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

MOSES LAKE, WASHINGTON
JULY 14, 2005

The Washington State Conservation Commission (Commission/WSCC) met in regular session July 14, 2005 at the Best Western in Moses Lake, Washington. Commission Vice-Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

SUMMARY OF MOTIONS & ACTION ITEMS

1. *Approval of Consent Agenda*

Commissioner Eriksen moved to approve the June 15, 2005 Special Meeting Minutes and the Revised Commission Meeting Presentation Policy. Commissioner Barker seconded. Motion passed.

2. *King Conservation District Election*

Commissioner Barker moved to announce the election of Richard Gelb to the King Conservation District. Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion passed.

3. *Benton Conservation District Supervisor Appointment*

Commissioner Faulconer moved to approve the supervisor appointment of Jack Clark to the Benton Conservation District. Commissioner Boyum seconded. Motion passed.

4. *Pend Oreille Conservation District Annexation*

Commissioner Eriksen moved to approve the request as presented for the annexation of the City of Ione to the Pend Oreille Conservation District. Commissioner Faulconer seconded. Motion passed.

5. *Legal Business*

The Commission requested that Mr. Clark write a letter in response to Mr. Niemi's letter stating this issue is the responsibility of the Cowlitz CD Board and not the Commission.

6. *Conservation District Report Card*

Commissioner Eriksen moved to make the Conservation District Report Card public and continue sending the Report to the districts. Commissioner Stoker seconded. Motion passed.

7. *Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)*

Commissioner Barker moved to approve the technical assistance distribution recommendation for the CREP Program. Commissioner Eriksen seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Faulconer moved that the Commission establish a group to begin a CREP Program Performance Review with a critical analysis and report to be discussed at a future meeting. Commission staff will develop a plan to review the CREP Program with suggestions on how to proceed in the future. Commissioner Barker seconded. Motion passed.

8. *WSCC Financial Report*

Commissioner Barker moved to approve the proposed 2005-07 Biennium Budget. Commissioner Faulconer seconded. Motion passed.

9. *WACD Request for Funding for the 2005 Annual Meeting*

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Commissioner Boyum moved to approve \$10,000 for the 2005 WACD Annual Meeting. Commission staff will determine criteria for the method of support and work with WACD in finding ways to increase attendance. Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion passed.

10. Regional Salmon Recovery Plans

Commissioner Stoker moved to authorize Mark Clark to formally express at the Salmon Recovery Funding Board meeting the Commission's official position and concern regarding the regional recovery plans and depending upon the response from the meeting, that an appropriate response letter be drafted and reviewed by the Commission. Commissioner Boyum seconded. Motion passed.

11. WSCC Work Plan

Commissioner Boyum moved to approve the proposed 2005-06 Annual Work Plan. Commissioner Eriksen seconded. Motion passed.

12. Conservation District Audits Policy

Commissioner Barker moved to approve the proposed Conservation District Audits Policy. Commissioner Eriksen seconded. Motion passed.

ATTENDEES

Commission Members

Lynn Brown, Vice Chair
Bill Boyum, Member, DNR
Lynn Bahrych, Member
Robert Barker, Member
Paul Stoker, Member, WACD
Tracy Eriksen, Member
Lee Faulconer, Member, AG

Commission Staff

Mark Clark, Executive Director
Mary Anderson, Executive Assistant
Butch Ogden, Field Service Manager
Bill Broughton, Field Service Manager
Ray Ledgerwood, Program Coordinator
Debbie Becker, Administrative Programs

Guests

Gus Hughbanks, NRCS
Fred Colvin, WACD
Carolyn Kelly, Skagit CD
George Boggs, Whatcom CD

Cheryl Sonnen, Asotin County CD
Terry Bruegman, Columbia CD
Chuck Perry, F&W Commission
John Larson, WACD

ADDITIONS/CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA

Vice Chair Brown opened discussion for additions or changes to the preliminary agenda.

Commissioner Eriksen requested the May 19, 2005 Minutes be taken off the consent agenda for corrections.

INTRODUCTIONS & MEMBER/PARTNERSHIP REPORTS

Commissioner Bill Boyum, Department of Natural Resources

Forest Riparian Forest Easements – More money is being sought for small farmers that have been impacted.

Fire Season – Under control at this point. Lightning will be the most likely factor besides fireworks.

Commissioner Lee Faulconer, Department of Agriculture (Agriculture)

Foster Creek Tour – Very successful.

Alternative Energy Issues – Meetings will begin.

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1 **Commissioner Eriksen, WACD Central Representative**

2 *Conservation Security Program – The Pend Oreille CD is engaged.*

3 **Commissioner Lynn Bahrych, Washington Environmental Council**

4 *Governor's Livestock Dairy Operations Committee – Commissioner Bahrych will be appointed by the*
5 *Governor to serve on this committee.*

6 **Gus Hughbanks, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

7 *Conservation Security Program – Sign ups are completed. Meetings will begin with the WACD Farm*
8 *Policy Committee as well as Oregon and Idaho.*

9 **Rod Hamilton, Farm Service Agency (FSA)**

10 *Disaster Programs – Working on emergency conservation programs.*

11 *Budget Problems – Cuts continue.*

12 **George Boggs, Washington Association of District Employees (WADE)**

13 *WADE Training and Conference Follow up – WADE Report handed out. Training was successful!*

14 *Mr. Boggs congratulated Carolyn Kelly on the great job on the forestry section. The WADE*

15 *President's Award was given to Mark Clark. Congratulations were given to Mr. Clark.*

16 *Planning Certification Meeting – Ray Ledgerwood and Harold Crose will facilitate.*

17 *Commissioner Eriksen requested that the WADE Report given by Mr. Boggs be sent to the district boards.*
18 *It would be a useful tool in encouraging more attendance.*

19 **John Larson, Executive Director - Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD)**

20 *WACD Issue Committees – Committees are working well.*

21 *WACD Website – Website is being updated to reflect current information.*

22 *CSP Meeting – Facilitated meeting with the districts and NRCS.*

23 **Commissioner Lynn Brown, WACD Eastern Representative**

24 *Governor's Livestock Dairy Operations Committee – Commissioner Brown is on the Committee*
25 *representing WACD.*

27 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

28 *No comments were given.*

30 **DECEMBER 2004 WSCC COMMISSION MEETING ACTION UPDATES**

31 *Mark Clark, Executive Director, provided an update of the agency action items from the May 2005*
32 *Commission Meeting.*

34 **APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

35 *Vice Chair Brown opened the consent agenda.*

36 **Commissioner Eriksen moved to approve the June 15, 2005 Special Meeting**
37 **Minutes and the Revised Commission Meeting Presentation Policy.**
38 **Commissioner Barker seconded. Motion passed.**

40 **ELECTIONS**

41 **King Conservation District Election**

42 *A letter and documentation requested by the Commission at the May 2005 Commission Meeting from the*
43 *King Conservation District election was presented by Mark Clark.*

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1 **Commissioner Barker moved to announce the election of Richard Gelb to**
2 **the King Conservation District. Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion**
3 **passed.**

4 Commissioner Barker noted that he had abstained from the motion at the May 2005 Commission Meeting
5 because it was unclear what the Commission's legal rights and responsibilities are and encouraged more
6 information from the assistant attorney general on the wording of the rulemaking process.

8 APPOINTMENTS

9 *Benton Conservation District Supervisor Appointment*

10 Commissioner Brown supports the appointment of Jack Clark to the Benton Conservation District

11 **Commissioner Faulconer moved to approve the supervisor appointment of**
12 **Jack Clark to the Benton Conservation District. Commissioner Boyum**
13 **seconded. Motion passed.**

15 ANNEXATION

16 Mark Clark, Executive Director, presented the annexation requested from the Pend Oreille Conservation
17 District.

18 **Commissioner Eriksen moved to approve the request as presented for the**
19 **annexation of the City of Ione to the Pend Oreille Conservation District.**
20 **Commissioner Faulconer seconded. Motion passed.**

22 LEGAL BUSINESS

23 *Letter from Kelly Niemi of the Cowlitz Conservation District*

24 Mr. Clark gave a quick overview of the letter that was sent from Mr. Kelly Niemi regarding a possible
25 conflict of interest. Mr. Clark spoke to Howard Jaeger, Chair of the Cowlitz Conservation District
26 regarding the issue.

27 The Commission requested that Mr. Clark write a letter in response to Mr. Niemi's letter stating this issue
28 is the responsibility of the Cowlitz CD Board and not the Commission.

30 WSCC GRANTS PROGRAM

31 *Conservation District Report Card*

32 Mr. Clark presented the Grants CD Report Card. The majority of the districts are doing well with meeting
33 deadlines. The report is being sent to the districts and has triggered responses.

34 **Commissioner Eriksen moved to make the Conservation District Report**
35 **Card public and continue sending the Report to the districts. Commissioner**
36 **Stoker seconded. Motion passed.**

38 CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP)

39 Debbie Becker, CREP Coordinator, gave an overview of the process and recommendation on the technical
40 assistance distribution history from the June 2005 Special Meeting. Cost share has already been
41 distributed.

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Ms. Becker recommended that \$23,000 be held in reserve. Ms. Becker spoke with a few members of the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) CREP Subcommittee. They support holding funding from those districts that have zero contracts. If there are landowners that visit the conservation district office and the technicians offer the CREP program resulting in a pre-contract signature, funding will be provided to the district.

WACD CREP Subcommittee Comments

George Boggs, Subcommittee Past Co-Chair thanked the commissioners for their help and support. Mr. Boggs gave recognition and special thanks to Ms. Becker for her hard work.

Mr. Boggs recommended performing a performance audit on the program. The information would be helpful to the Commission in making future funding decisions. There are critical pieces of information that will be necessary to have in order to retain future CREP funding.

Carolyn Kelly, Subcommittee Co-Chair, had concerns that although the districts were asked to explain how they anticipated using the funds, they were not able to quantify. A tiered system was used in response to a WACD resolution. It was not anticipated to become an entitlement program. It is difficult to recommend sending money out to a district when there is not performance. Ms. Kelly agrees with the recommendation for a funding reserve.

Commissioner Barker complimented Ms. Becker and Mark Clark on doing what was needed to create a process for evaluating applications and making recommendations to the Commission. The Subcommittee can play an important role in the process but ultimately, the funding is the Commission's responsibility, not the individual district's or the committee's.

Districts have a continuing obligation for maintenance and in addition have proposals in hand which will lead to contracts. These are among the things that are verifiable and measurable and can serve, in part, as a basis for funding decisions.

It is important to document CREP achievements of this first phase so that the program can be presented effectively to Legislative and Administrative agencies. Future developments should involve collaboration with the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the WACD Subcommittee.

Rod Hamilton, Farm Service Agency, commented that there are significant concerns on where the CREP program has been going.

Commissioner Barker moved to approve the technical assistance distribution recommendation for the CREP Program. Commissioner Eriksen seconded. Motion passed.

Commissioner Faulconer moved that the Commission establish a group to begin a CREP Program Performance Review with a critical analysis and report to be discussed at a future meeting. Commission staff will develop a plan to review the CREP Program with suggestions on how to proceed in the future. Commissioner Barker seconded. Motion passed.

A discussion followed. Mark Clark and Commissioner Faulconer will look at developing an outline structure to review.

WSCC FINANCIAL REPORT

Debbie Becker, Administrative Services, presented the financial review of 2003-05 Biennium and the proposed 2005-07 Biennium budget.

Commissioner Barker moved to approve the proposed 2005-07 Biennium Budget. Commissioner Faulconer seconded. Motion passed.

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WACD Request for Funding for the 2005 Annual Meeting

John Larson, WACD Executive Director requested \$10,000 to help defray the costs of speaker fees and training support for supervisors at the 2005 Annual Meeting.

A discussion followed regarding the number of attendees.

Commissioner Boyum moved to approve \$10,000 for the 2005 WACD Annual Meeting. Commission staff will determine criteria for the method of support and work with WACD in finding ways to increase attendance. Commissioner Bahrych seconded. Motion passed.

COMMISSION OPERATIONS

Upcoming National Association of State Conservation Agencies Annual Conference

Mark Clark gave an update on the planning progress for the meeting. Ray Ledgerwood will facilitate a session for the state field service managers in conjunction with the main conference. They will talk about capacity building ideas and issues within their states.

Land Use Discussions

Mr. Clark reported that discussions with the Governor's office are underway. Stu Trefy is also involved.

Governor's Monitoring Forum

Mr. Clark will present the coastal limiting factors analysis (LFAs) at the next Monitoring Forum Meeting.

Mr. Clark noted that the agency is looking at a way to continue funding to keep Carol Smith with the agency. Carol Smith has been an invaluable technical asset to the agency and is a great resource for her work on these issues. Ms. Smith's contract has expired but a proposal is underway to the Monitoring Forum to have her work on the coastal LFAs.

Regional Salmon Recovery Plans

Regional Salmon Recovery Plans were due to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on June 30 and have been submitted by the Salmon Recovery Regions around the state.

A problem with the Puget Sound Recovery Plan arose within the last two weeks. Each water resource inventory area in the region was submitted as a separate chapter to the regional plan. The Skagit recovery plan was done by tribe and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and was not coordinated with any other stakeholders, in comparison to all of the other chapters, which were developed using collaborative processes. This was contrary to assurances from Shared Strategy for Puget Sound, the entity charged with coordinating the Puget Sound Recovery Plan. Local stakeholders, including the Skagit CD, were told that their opportunity to comment would come when the Plan was published in the Federal Register this fall. Local agricultural and forest land owners are hopeful that they can have input on the plan before it is published.

Carolyn Kelly, Skagit CD, advised that questions should be asked regarding the removal of the input of others in the plan. Puget Sound Shared Strategy said that they would write the report and come back to the stakeholders for review before publishing. They moved forward without the opportunity for stakeholder comments. The Report recommends actions that concern the districts.

A discussion was held regarding the concerns expressed and how it will affect the districts work.

Commissioner Stoker moved to authorize Mark Clark to formally express at the Salmon Recovery Funding Board meeting the Commission's official position and concern regarding the regional recovery plans and depending upon the response from the meeting, that an appropriate response letter be drafted and reviewed by the Commission. Commissioner Boyum seconded. Motion passed.

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It was agreed that the letter would be sent to significant parties in an attempt to provide a congressional record and register. The letter will be combined with the letter being prepared by Skagit CD.

Mr. Clark will talk with Commissioner Peters on this issue.

WSCC Work Plan

Mr. Clark presented the 2005-06 Annual Work Plan. Progress reports will be provided every other month.

Commissioner Boyum moved to approve the proposed 2005-06 Annual Work Plan. Commissioner Eriksen seconded. Motion passed.

Commission Administrative Policies

Conservation District Audits Policy

Bill Broughton presented the Conservation District Audits Policy. This policy is effective from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2007 and defines how costs for audits of conservation districts that exceed budgeted amounts will be handled by the Conservation Commission.

Commissioner Barker moved to approve the proposed Conservation District Audits Policy. Commissioner Eriksen seconded. Motion passed.

Revised Natural Resources Conservation Service Representative Policy – Informational Item Only

Mary Anderson, Executive Assistant presented the proposed revised policy of the Natural Resources Conservation Service Representative for review with approval at the September 2005 Commission Meeting. The original policy was amended March 19, 1987. Suggestions and comments are welcome prior to the September meeting for inclusion in the revision of the policy.

Revised Commission Member, Designees and Executive Director Travel – Informational Item Only

Ms. Anderson presented the proposed policy that combines the Out-of-State Travel Authorization and Interim Approval for Commission Member Travel policies into one policy. Suggestions and comments are welcome prior to the September meeting for inclusion in the revision of the policy.

FIELD SERVICE MANAGERS REPORT

Butch Ogden, Central Region Field Service Manager gave the report.

Central Region Field Service Manager, Butch Ogden

- Warden and Moses Lake CDs - finalize livestock money.
- Benton CD - assessment and staffing issues.
- Okanogan – assessment process.

Southwest Region Field Service Manager, Tom Salzer

- Pacific CD – water quality complaint from a state agency as well as TMDL issues.
- Kitsap, Mason, Pacific CDs – assistance on personnel and contract issues.

Eastern Region Field Service Manager, Bill Broughton

- Stevens Co. CD – 25 year county strategic plan assisted by Ray Ledgerwood.
- Engineering Clusters
- Ferry CD – looking for a new manager.

Puget Sound Region Field Service Manager, Stu Trefry

- Clallam CD - long range plans and possible assessment.
- Pierce CD – served on committee to rank grants for projects funding by district assessment dollars from inside the Tacoma city limits.
- Jefferson Co. CD – Supervisor John Boulton celebrated 50 years of service as a supervisor.

A discussion followed regarding problems and issues that the districts are facing and resolving.

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1 Mr. Ogden stated that he spends approximately 60% of his time on personnel issues. The Field Service
2 Managers have emphasized annual and long range planning with the districts. Several districts are looking
3 at assessments. It was noted that the Coordinated Resource Management group is working on how to move
4 forward and getting their ideas out to the field.

5 Commissioner Barker commented that he was pleased that supervisors attended the interaction dinner held
6 in Moses Lake. It was noted that more supervisors are engaged in the daily activities of the districts.

7 Mark Clark, Executive Director, also noted that it was nice to hear from the supervisors that attended the
8 interaction dinner in Moses Lake applaud Mr. Ogden's efforts in his region.

9 Mr. Ogden, on behalf of the Moses Lake CD, thanked the Commission for holding the meeting in Moses
10 Lake and letting them highlight some of their accomplishments.

12 NEXT COMMISSION MEETING

13 Regular Commission Meeting:

14 **September 14, 2005** - Field Tour coordinated by the Clallam Conservation District and no host
15 Interaction Dinner.

16 **September 15, 2005** - Regular Commission Meeting

17 Red Lion Inn

18 Juan de Fuca Room

19 221 North Lincoln

20 Port Angeles, Washington

22 ADJOURNMENT

23 Co-Chair Brown adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.